

Pilot Project: The College of Direct Support

The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare is launching a pilot project in June to provide educational support for providers serving people with developmental disabilities. The department has contracted with the nationally recognized College of Direct Support, which offers an internet-based curriculum for direct support professionals, supervisors, and managers. The Idaho State School and Hospital is also adopting the curricula as part of its professional development for staff.

This educational opportunity will be offered free to selected providers for one year, with a possible extension of up to three years. Providers eligible to participate in the first year of the pilot project are Developmental Disability Agencies, Supported Living Providers, Certified Family Home Providers, and Medicaid Supported Employment Providers. Individuals who are self-directing their own supports will also have the opportunity to access the pilot project for the people who serve them. Information on the College of Direct Support is available at <http://info.collegeofdirectsupport.com/>. Applications to participate in the pilot will be available on May 8th, through the department.

The course will primarily focus on direct care staff, although there will be lessons for supervisors and management. The internet allows participants to take the course at their own pace, and covers topics that include safety, health, medication administration, and personal rights. Cameron Gilliland, IDHW program manager for developmental disabilities, is enthusiastic about the pilot project. “The College of Direct Support offers top quality instruction,” Gilliland says. “This is a major time commitment for providers, but in return direct care staff can receive intensive training to better serve people with developmental disabilities in our state. We are excited to offer this opportunity.”

On the morning of May 15th a forum regarding the pilot will be held at Department of Health and Welfare, 1720 Westgate Drive Suite A in Room 119, Boise from 9:00 until Noon. Representatives of the College of Direct Support will be available to answer questions about the College. Department of Health and Welfare representatives will be on hand to answer specific questions about the pilot project. Questions about the pilot project also can be directed to Cameron Gilliland at (208) 334-5536.

Timeline

April	Announcement of the pilot
April 3 – 30	Workgroup meets to discuss pilot, make recommendations, and form workgroups around application and enrollment.
May 8	Deliverables for pilot completed including provider application, criteria for pilot success, criteria for provider selection Applications available to providers
May 15	Provider meeting in Boise with Bill Tapp (College of Direct Support).
May 30	Provider applications due
June 7	Providers chosen for the pilot
June	Pilot begins